

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

FRANCIS DEVANDRA RAJ, et al.,

Defendants.

CASE NO. CR05-0292C

ORDER

This matter is before the Court on Defendants' motion to permit joint meetings with counsel at the Federal Detention Center in SeaTac, Washington. (Dkt. No. 66.) Having considered the entirety of the record and files herein, the Court GRANTS Defendant's motion IN PART as follows.

Defendants seek an order permitting the three of them to meet jointly with their respective attorneys at FDC SeaTac for the purpose of "discuss[ing] the legal issues and potential for resolution of their cases." (Mot. 2.) Although at least two of the Defendants have been incarcerated in the same unit for several months, the United States Attorney has denied their requests for such a meeting and counsel for FDC SeaTac has not responded. The government argues that such meetings would serve only to give Defendants an opportunity to "get their stories straight," or to apply "improper pressure or intimidation" to potentially reluctant parties. (*See* Opp'n 2–3.)

Although each Defendant is a potential witness against his co-defendants, the Court will err on the side of preserving Defendants' Sixth Amendment rights to fully discuss and prepare their cases in the

1 absence of specific allegations of improper conduct or undue influence. *Cf. United States v. Coupez*, 603  
2 F.3d 1347, 1349–50 (9th Cir. 1979) (affirming order permitting three co-defendants to meet jointly with  
3 counsel on bi-weekly basis before trial).

4 Accordingly, the Court GRANTS Defendants' motion IN PART, and ORDERS that Defendants  
5 be permitted to meet jointly with their respective counsel at FDC SeaTac within five court days of the  
6 date of this Order, for a maximum of three hours. The Court further ORDERS that Defendants may  
7 conduct a second meeting under the same conditions no later than fourteen calendar days before trial.

8 SO ORDERED this 9th day of January, 2006.

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10 A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John E. Coyner", is written over a horizontal line.

11 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE  
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